

## Message Text

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47

ACTION AF-06

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 EB-07 L-02 ERDA-05 AID-05 CEA-01

CIAE-00 CIEP-01 COME-00 DODE-00 FPC-01 H-02 INR-07

INT-05 NSAE-00 NSC-05 OMB-01 PM-03 SAM-01 OES-03

SP-02 SS-15 STR-01 TRSE-00 FRB-03 PA-01 USIA-06

PRS-01 XMB-02 /087 W  
----- 050932

R 121030Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7009

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0402

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EINV, MA

SUBJECT: MALAGASY GOVT CHARGES AGAINST OIL MARKETING COMPANIES

REFS: A. STATE 21653; B. TANANARIVE 125; C. STATE 14339  
D. TANANARIVE 1986

BEGIN SUMMARY: GOMR HAS LIFTED BAN ON TRAVEL OF FINANCIAL MANAGERS OF CALTEX, SHELL, AND TOTAL, ALL OF WHOM HAVE NOW RECEIVED EXIT VISAS TO LEAVE COUNTRY. CALTEX AND ESSO HAVE COMPLETED SIGNING OF GOMR REPORT ON INVESTIGATIONS OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE REPATRIATION (PROCES VERBAUX), AND CALTEX MANAGER HAS RENEWED APPLICATION FOR EXIT VISA TO TEST WHETHER RESTRICTION ON TRAVEL OF OIL COMPANY GENERAL MANAGERS REMAINS IN EFFECT. VISA APPLICATION INITIALLY NOT REJECTED, AS CALTEX MANAGER ANTICIPATED, BUT HAS BEEN REFERRED TO MILITARY DIRECTORY FOR DECISION. EMBASSY INCLINED INTERPRET THESE DEVELOPMENTS AS HOPEFUL SIGN DIRECTORY MAY BE FLEXIBLE IN DISPUTE WITH OIL MARKETING COMPANIES OVER FOREIGN EXCHANGE REPATRIATION ISSUE.

END SUMMARY.

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1. CALTEX MANAGER JULIAN DASHIELL CALLED ON AMBASSADOR MARCH 7 TO REQUEST RENEWED "DIPLOMATIC APPROACH" TO GOMR TO ALLOW CALTEX OFFICERS TO LEAVE COUNTRY. HE REPORTED HE HAS COMPLETED SIGNING OF "PROCES VERBAUX," WITH RESERVATIONS, AND HAS YET TO RECEIVE FORMAL NOTIFICATION OF FINE LEVIED AGAINST CALTEX. BEFORE MAKING ANY APPROACH TO GOMR, AMB ADVISED DASHIELL TO RENEW APPLICATION FOR EXIT VISA TO DETERMINE WHETHER PROHIBITION ON TRAVEL OF OIL COMPANY OFFICIALS STILL REMAINS IN EFFECT.
  2. DASHIELL CALLED EMBASSY MARCH 10 TO REPORT RESTRICTION ON TRAVEL OF FINANCIAL MANAGERS OF CALTEX, SHELL, AND TOTAL, IN EFFECT SINCE DECEMBER, HAS BEEN LIFTED. ALL RECEIVED EXIT VISAS LAST WEEK, ALTHOUGH WITHOUT ANY EXPLANATION FOR CHANGE. CALTEX FINANCIAL MANAGER, AN AMERICAN NATIONAL WHO HAS HAD ASSIGNMENT WAITING FOR HIM ELSEWHERE FOR PAST THREE MONTHS, PLANS TO LEAVE IMMEDIATELY. LATER SAME DAY DASHIELL REPORTED HIS OWN APPLICATION FOR EXIT VISA NOT REJECTED, AS HE ANTICIPATED, BUT HE INFORMED APPLICATION REFERRED TO MILITARY DIRECTORY
  3. ESSO MANAGER PIERRE GAUTRET, IN CONVERSATION WITH EMBOFF MARCH 7, REPORTED HE AND HIS FIRM NOW TEND TO BE OPTIMISTIC THEY CAN RESOLVE FOREIGN EXCHANGE REPATRIATION QUESTION WITH GOMR AND CONTINUE OIL MARKETING OPERATIONS HERE. SINCE GAUTRET HAS NO IMMEDIATE NEED DEPART MADAGASCAR, HE IS NOT RAISING TRAVEL QUESTION AT THIS TIME, BUT RATHER USING VARIOUS CHANNELS TO BRING ESSO POSITION ON EXCHANGE REPATRIATION QUESTION TO ATTENTION OF NEW FINANCE MINISTER AND OTHER MEMBERS MILITARY DIRECTORY. (ESSO MAINTAINS IT COMMITTED NO WILLFUL OR KNOWLEDGEABLE VIOLATION OF FOREIGN EXCHANGE REGULATIONS; REPATRIATED ALL FOREIGN EXCHANGE TO MADAGASCAR WITHIN AVERAGE OF 2-1/2 MONTHS; AND HAS CONSISTENTLY MAINTAINED LARGER CASH BALANCE LOCALLY THAN OVERSEAS, TO BENEFIT OF COUNTRY'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE POSITION.) GAUTRET REPORTED HE ALSO UNDERSTANDS FROM RELIABLE SOURCES CLOSE TO MILITARY DIRECTORY THAT FORMER FOREIGN MINISTER DIDIER RATSIRAKA IS NOW THE MOST INFLUENTIAL MEMBER OF DIRECTORY IN DECIDING MOST ISSUES THAT COME UP, AND RATSIRAKA IS CONFIDENTIAL
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- NOT A "HARD-LINER" ON QUESTION OF OIL MARKETING COMPANIES.
4. COMMENT: THESE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS APPEAR HOPEFUL SIGN THAT NEW MILITARY DIRECTORY MAY BE PREPARED TO TAKE FRESH LOOK AT DISPUTE WITH OIL MARKETING COMPANIES, AND PERHAPS RESOLVE QUESTION WITHOUT LEVYING IMPOSSIBLY LARGE FINES. GAUTRET'S REPORT THAT RATSIRAKA INCLINED

TO BE FLEXIBLE ON OIL COMPANY ISSUE ACCORDS WITH RECENT  
SIMILAR REPORT OF EMBASSY SOURCE WELL PLACED IN  
GOMR.  
MENDENHALL

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
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